

B+ Delaware

Ruth Ann Minner has always been interested in management issues. As lieutenant governor in the early 1990s, she chaired a special commission on Government Reorganization and Effectiveness. So it's no surprise that she has focused on management during her two terms in the governor's office. And there were things to straighten out when she took over in 2001.

Although the state had been well run, the offices that dealt with the budget, human resources, information technology and asset management were fragmented. Minner launched an effort to bring all of these central government services under one umbrella, in an Office of Management and Budget. "Effective management of central state services should serve as the backbone of state government," Minner said at the time.

By all reports, the plan has worked. The centralized office has fostered collaboration and has broken down some of the old bureaucratic barriers to the delivery of state services. Consider the Delaware Employment Link (DEL), the state's new online job

State and local officials discuss how land-use proposals impact the capital budget.

application tool. From the beginning, human resources, information technology and the budget office have been partners in the DEL project and have formed a cohesive team working toward the same goal.

While there still are some problems in hiring, the DEL site has helped the state move forward. Applicants create a profile, apply for multiple positions, track jobs—and are notified when new positions open up. DEL also provides a more efficient system for managers to review applicant information—a big leap forward from its antiquated precursor.

The major state budget planning functions also have been consolidated into one unit. The goal is the same: better coordination—especially between state regulations and local land-use decisions. "When the

majority of infrastructure funding is the responsibility of state government," says Mike Jackson, director of Budget Development, Planning and Administration, "it is critical that funding decisions are made in a coordinated fashion." Under Jackson's direction, the state set up monthly meetings between local officials and state resource experts to discuss land-use proposals and their broader impact on the capital budget. This new effort has enabled state and local planners to work together within local timelines—and better inform the capital planning and budget processes.

Delaware has strong financial practices that include excellent long-term planning, budgeting and maintenance of a sound structural balance. Its financial reporting is pretty good, too. The only real problems have been with delays in getting the reports out. In 2006, for example, the state's annual financial report was submitted 227 days after the close of the fiscal year.

After Delaware lifted electricity rate caps in 2006, power costs for state facilities were projected to double. The state creatively aggregated the electricity load for schools, local governments and volunteer fire companies, thus maximizing public-sector purchasing power. An innovative reverse auction was held that, according to Bob Furman, the director of Facilities Management, saved \$9 million for the state and its aggregation partners.

There still are areas that need attention. Contrary to trends in most of the country, Delaware does not produce performance audits or evaluations. The state audits that are done are fundamentally financial in nature, as used to be the case pretty much everywhere. They don't examine program performance or make comparisons between similar programs and services over time.

Another opportunity for improvement: The state's information technology plan lacks specific details about how goals will be accomplished. Key objectives and measures within the plan would be very helpful in providing better direction and accountability.

For additional data and analysis, go to
pewcenteronthestates.org/gpp

Money A-

Long-Term Outlook	●
Budget Process	●
Structural Balance	●
Contracting/Purchasing	●
Financial Controls/Reporting	●

People B

Strategic Workforce Planning	●
Hiring	●
Retaining Employees	●
Training and Development	●
Managing Employee Performance	●

Infrastructure B+

Capital Planning	●
Project Monitoring	●
Maintenance	●
Internal Coordination	●
Intergovernmental Coordination	●

Information B-

Strategic Direction	●
Budgeting for Performance	●
Managing for Performance	●
Performance Auditing & Evaluation	●
Online Services & Information	●

Population (rank): 853,476 (45)

Average per capita income (rank):
\$26,812 (14)

Total state spending (rank):
\$6,519,932,000 (43)

Spending per capita (rank):
\$7,639 (3)

Governor: Ruth Ann Minner (D)

First elected: 11/2000

Senate: 21 members: 13 D, 8 R

Term Limits: None

House: 41 members: 19 D, 22 R

Term Limits: None